

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-17 (canceled).

Claim 18. (new): An ink jet recording apparatus, comprising:

a recording head including a nozzle orifice communicated with a pressure generating chamber;

a pressure generator, which varies pressure of ink in the pressure generating chamber;
and

a controller, which drives the pressure generator to eject ink droplets from the nozzle orifice such that a plurality of first operations and a plurality of second operations are alternately repeated in one flushing operation when a recording operation of the recording head is not performed, wherein:

each of the first operations includes a plurality of repetitive drivings of the pressure generator each of which is performed such that a meniscus of ink is vibrated to an extent that an ink droplet is not ejected from the nozzle orifice; and

each of the second operations includes a plurality of repetitive ink ejections.

19. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein an ejection frequency in a final one of the second operations is higher than an ejection frequency in an initial one of the second operations.

20. (new) The flushing control method as set forth in claim 19, wherein an ejection frequency in a latter one of the second operations is higher than an ejection frequency in a former one of the second operations.

21. (new) The flushing control method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the repeated number of ink ejection in a final one of the second operations is greater than the repeated number of ink ejection in an initial one of the second operations.

22. (new) The flushing control method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the repeated number of ink ejection in a latter one of the second operations is greater than the repeated number of ink ejection in a former one of the second operations.

23. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein the pressure generator is driven at the maximum driving frequency thereof to vibrate the meniscus of ink.

24. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein an initial one of the first operations is performed before an initial one of the second operations is

performed.

25. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein:
the recording head performs the recording operation while moving in a first direction;
and
the second operations are performed when the recording head is in a stand-by state which
is defined as a time period from when the recording head stops moving to when the recording
head starts moving.

26. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 25, further comprising
a timer, which measures a time period of the stand-by state,
wherein the repeated number of ink ejections in each of the second operations is
determined in accordance with the measured stand-by time period.

27. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein the
repeated number of ink ejection in each of the second operations is determined in accordance
with a type of ejected ink.

28. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein a
vibrating number of the pressure generator in each of the first operations is determined in
accordance with a type of ejected ink.

29. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein the pressure generator is a piezoelectric vibrator which changes the volume of the pressure generating chamber to vary the pressure of ink therein.

30. (new) The ink jet recording apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein the controller includes:

a drive signal generator, which generates a common drive signal including a first waveform configured to perform the first operations and a second waveform configured to perform the second operations; and

a drive waveform selector, which applies the first waveform and the second waveform selectively to the pressure generator.